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November 25, 2003

The Honorable John D. Ashcroft  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

We are writing to express our concern over a reported memorandum of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") detailing how to collect information on Iraq war protestors. We would ask that you immediately provide us with a copy of the memorandum; as well as inform us what, if any, terrorism leads the effort has led to; and what safeguards you have put in place to ensure that legitimate First Amendment rights are protected.

Needless to say, we believe these efforts raise significant First Amendment concerns. Persons at such protests are exercising their constitutional right of assembly. We are perplexed as to how the FBI views these acts as either illegal or as indicators of terrorist activity. The September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks occurred without public warning; instead, it appears that the only potential evidence of those attacks was within FBI offices, not at public demonstrations. Efforts such as this indicate that, instead of reforming itself to prevent terrorist activity and safeguard the rights of law-abiding residents, the FBI may be returning to the days of COINTELPRO that so many of us hoped were behind us.

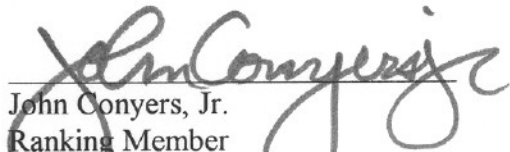
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this request, please feel free to contact us through Perry Apfelbaum or Ted Kalo of the House Judiciary Committee staff (tel: 202-225-6504; fax: 202-225-4423), 2142 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.


The Honorable John D. Ashcroft

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Sincerely,

  
John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary

  
Terrold Nadler  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Constitution

cc: The Honorable William E. Moschella  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Steve Chabot  
Chairman  
U.S. House Subcommittee on the Constitution